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THE
PUNJAB SERIES

Vol. III.

THE
ANNEXATION OF THE PUNJAB

BY
"ECONOMIST,"

(An Officer of Practical Experience in the
Punjab)

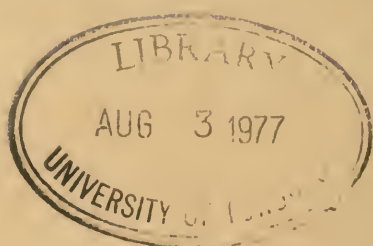
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PREFACE.

The following letters from "Economist," an old English Officer of position and experience in the Punjab, to the Governor General on the Annexation of the Punjab form the third volume of the Punjab Series which was started in 1895—Vols. I and II having already appeared—and will, though consisting of only a few pages, be found to be interesting, showing the insight of the author into Native character, and the reasons that led the British Government to annex the Punjab. How far the facts have been found to be true, and the policy has succeeded, the reader will be able to judge for himself.

The third volume of the Series promised was "Cunningham's History of the Sikhs," but the importance and interest attaching these letters have actuated their being placed before the public earlier. The opinion of the "Economist" on the Sikhs is deserving of note.

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ANNEXATION OF THE PUNJAB.

LETTERS ADDRESSD TO THE GOVERNOR-GENERAL OF INDIA, ON "ANNEXATION OF THE PUNJAUB," BY AN OFFICER OF PRACTICAL EXPERIENCE.

No. I.

MY LORD—At last an instalment of long deferred success has attended your arms. Mooltan has at last fallen—and though the Commander-in-Chief has failed to "strike an effectual blow" he is still able to hold his own, and we may hope that sooner or later the Punjaub may be at your disposal—a conquered country. It is therefore well to consider what you are to do with it when you get it, and I hope you will appreciate my motives in tendering you a little advice. If so I may be induced to favour you occasionally with my opinion of men and measures. I know something of this part of India—something of the people—and something of the Officials who will be your instruments—all which knowledge is very much at your service. I shall commence with generals, and as I proceed I may afterwards descend to particulars.

2. The arguments in favour of annexation of the Punjaub are rather negative than positive—rather that no one can devise any other *possible* plan than that the acquisition itself is desirable. Doubtless the territory is large; the people within and around it are made of sterner stuff than those of our earlier possessions; and the revenue is not large in proportion to the area. Were it possible to sink the country into the ocean I am not prepared to say that it would not be expedient to do so; but as we can't get rid of it in this way it comes to the proposition that

some one *must* hold the great plain of the Indus. Is it better that we should do so, or that some once else should?

3. And here I must observe that I consider Scinde and the Punjaub, for political purposes, one. If we withdraw from the Punjaub to retain Scinde—isolated on three sides and exposed to the Beloochees on the fourth—a dead drain on the revenue of India and an utterly *objectless* possession—to retain Scinde under these circumstances would, I say, be too preposterous for argument. If, again, we retain the Punjaub, we shall naturally keep Scinde too—and it will be useful and *indirectly* profitable possession. When, then, I speak of the Punjaub, I refer to the whole plain watered by the Indus and its tributaries.

4. The question now to be decided is no matter of petty policy—no mere affair of Dulleep Sing or Sir Frederick Currie, nor even a purely *Sikh* question. The *Sikhs* are the creatures of a day. Dulleep Singh is the creature of an hour. But it is now for you, my Lord, to fix the permanent limits of our Indian Empire. The pillars of Hercules must now be established. We approach (at least, I hope, we do) the termination of a struggle with the last great military power in India. To advance further into Asia were a folly not likely to be attempted after past experience. The great Empire of Hindoostan, differing in its parts, yet retaining a wonderful similitude throughout in the character, the habits, and the institutions of its people, is now our own. A lasting line of demarcation must be drawn; permanent landmarks must be set up; and then, having disposed of our external defences, we may turn to internal management, and do what we have never yet done—make the country *pay*. In truth it ought to pay, and more than pay, and there must be something rotten in the system, if the supreme rulers of India are obliged to borrow money at 6 per cent. I trust, then, that you will be satisfied with no *temporary* arrangement.

Take your line, but when you do take it let it be a permanent settlement of the question. Let us have no engagements for terms of years—no trusting to the chapter of accidents. Act as if your acts were to hold for hundreds of years. I am not going into Lord Hardinge's policy. This is a *fait accompli*, and we are now reaping the whirlwind. But this I will say that Lord Hardinge's plan, so far as the *mode* of governing the Punjaub went, admitted of argument. It *might* have been possible for Sir Henry Lawrence to have governed the Punjaub in the native form—but it is *not* possible that that policy should be justifiable which provided but for eight years, and did not *hint* at what was to follow. Yet 1854 is not so distant, and if there had been no rebellion—if the plan had worked perfectly—What then? Echo answers—what! There are no prophets in our days, and the world sees many changes. Our Indian Empire may stand or fall—your arrangements may exist through ages—or they may be swept away to-morrow—but at least let us have the *possibility* of success. Give us an intelligible theory—and we will be patriotic enough to hope that Britain may rule Hindoostan long enough to give it a fair trial. Patans, and Mahrattas, and Sikhs, one after the other, pass over the stage—but you must treat the Punjaub in a way that will be effected by no temporary changes. Hold it for good, or give it up for ever.

5. India may be said to have a double boundary. The great desert running up from the ocean to within 100 miles of the Hamalayas separates Hindoostan and the Dekkan from the Plain of the Indus. The line of defence between these countries may thus be reduced to the narrow neck between the desert and the hills—what now forms the Cis-Sutlej territory. Here exists no natural barrier (for I hardly consider the Sutlej or the Beas to be such), nor has art supplied the want by a chain of forts. It has been our practice in India to condemn the foreign aid of

fortifications, and we possess none in this part of the country. The fact merely amounts to this, that the tract is narrow enough to be defended by an army in the field. Hindoostan can only be entered by a superior force. The protecting army cannot be eluded. So long as we maintain in the Cis-Sutlej territory an army competent to meet all comers, so long is Hindoostan protected.

On the other hand, beyond the Indus we have a second boundary in the great mountain chain with which nature has hedged in India, as with a ring-fence. The boundary line is here much extended;—from the sea to Cashmere the distance is great. But then we have the defence of a natural mountain barrier. The mountainous country is too poor to maintain a force dangerous to us in the field. From a military invasion of Affghans or Beloochees we have nothing to fear; and to a foreign armament India is only accessible by one or two difficult passes—which if we defend with but a moderate force, no power can obtain entrance. You must now choose one of these two lines of military defence. Either occupy the Punjaub—withdraw from the Cantonments East of the Beas and Sutlej all troops but those required for internal administration—post along the line of the Indus the force destined for the general defence of the Empire, and be prepared on the occurrence of alarm to blockade the Khyber and the Bolan. Or if you are not prepared for this, withdraw from the Punjaub and Scinde—draw your military cordon across the Cis-Sutlej territory—build forts and tell off an army to be permanently stationed on the frontier, and at any time prepared to enact the scenes of '45-'46—to repel the occupants of the Punjaub whenever they may choose to measure their strength with us, but never again to cross the Sutlej.

6. I propose to consider,

First—Is it expedient to retain military possession of the Punjaub?

Second—If we retain military possession, in what form should the country be governed—directly by ourselves or in a native form?

Third—To discuss details of the western boundary, military and civil.

Fourth—If we annex the Punjaub—how is it to be administered?

7. The great question, after all, no doubt is—Will the Punjaub pay? and I therefore think it necessary to premise that I do not suppose, nor will I argue, that the Punjaub will pay *positively*—that it will defray the expenses of all the troops to be cantoned within its limits. Why the country which paid Runjeet so well should not pay still more powerful conquerors is not so clear—but that would involve a still broader question—our whole Indian system. Suffice that for the present at least we must take things as we find them—that under our present system the revenues of the Punjaub would not maintain the army—still it does not follow that the acquisition is a losing one. Wherever the frontier be fixed, the army occupying it must be charged to the general revenues of the country—and if, when we occupy the Punjaub, we are relieved from other expenses—if the revenue of the new country adds to our general rent-roll, and eliminates a considerable per centage of the cost of the occupying army—then may we hope that the finances of India will be put on a surer and a better footing, and a great *comparative* gain will be effected.

8. The occupation of a country depends on three considerations. 1—The difficulty of getting it. 2—The difficulty of keeping it. 3—The advantages derived from its possession. The difficulty of getting the Punjaub it is unnecessary for me to enter into. The force of circumstances has already decided that point. I do not anticipate that Shere Sing will be admitted to treat for the possession of the country. The die is cast, and the enemy in the field must be conquered.

9. The difficulty of keeping the country is a more fitting subject of argument. I believe that this difficulty has been very much exaggerated. Nothing is more firmly established by experience than the facility with which territory is retained when made our own—the indisposition of the people to *domestic* rebellion—and their inability to cope with troops unless they have some nucleus—some native army, with guns, discipline, and munitions of war. This fact could not be better exemplified than in the present year. The war has been protracted—there has been, if I may so speak, every encouragement to rebellion. Yet in the proper Sikh country there has been no popular war. The villages have not risen—the brothers and relatives of Shere Sing's soldiers in their villages of Mangha have taken no part in the fight. We are opposed but by the regular army which we left in existence, and, if reduced, yet capable of re-expansion by the return of absent soldiers to the nucleus which remained. If there has been a little desultry warfare it was but the last effort of Bedies and Gooroos and Rajas whom we had not quite stript of their resources. It is perhaps fortunate that the *undecomposed* elements have once more been permitted to boil over. The bad humours have come to the surface and may now be eradicated. To be effectually conquered, a country must be twice conquered. It is in the nature of things that it should be so.

10. Whatever it may be geographically, the Punjab is undoubtedly *ethnically* a part of Hindoostan. Its people, though more hardy are in all their moral and political characteristics the same. They are equally prepared to acquiesce in a foreign rule—equally accustomed to look on such as their normal state. The great mass of the population between the Jumna and the Ravee, and of that from which the Sikh army is chiefly supplied, is "*Jat*"—a tribe of whom it may be truly said that they habitually as much excel in the arts of peace as they occasionally do in those of war. They make good soldiers but equally good subjects.

With the exception of the castes of the Banniah genus and small loose population of the towns, and the artificers and people of servile race in the villages, the remainder of the population is Mussulman—not turbulent pattans, but agriculturists of converted Hindoo castes—good cultivators and quiet subjects—with all the industry of Hindoos without their religious bigotry, and at the same time without the pride, *nationality*, and fanaticism of the Mussulman; in fact, a people who have *politically* ceased to be Hindoos without politically becoming Mussulmen—just the sort of subjects we want.

I do not refer to the *Un-Indian* tribes about Peshawur and the extreme frontier. Of them I shall more particularly speak when I come to the detail of the western boundary, and point out the coincident, ethnical, and geographical line which there exists. In the meantime, I assert that the population of the plains on this side the Indus is one eminently fitted to make good subjects, that it is either '*Jat*' or agricultural Mussulman, and that both are all that we could desire. I have not mentioned the Sikhs because they must be separately touched on. I believe that I shall be able to refer the greater portion of them to the general *Jat* population, and I am of opinion that the remainder may easily, and at no great cost, be rendered quiet and contented like the petty Sikh Patteedars in the protected territory. But here it will be necessary to digress into a little episode to show who the Sikhs of the present day are; a subject on which much misapprehension exists, and upon which, with your leave, I will now enter.

ECONOMIST.

No. II.

A DIGRESSION SHOWING WHO THE SIKHS ARE.

MY LORD—It has been customary to suppose the Sikhs a separate tribe—apart from the population of the country, and separated therefrom by a well-defined, religious, and

political line. Now this may have been pretty correct in former times when Sikhs were Sikhs, and there was no mistaking them; but we shall go very far wrong, indeed, if we suppose that the standard at all applies to the mass of Sikh soldiers in the regular army formed and handed down by Ranj-ot Sing, and by which we are now opposed. The original founders of the Sikh religion designed it as entirely new and a *proselytising* creed, which might absorb both Mussulman and Hindoo. Circumstances soon placed the Sikhs in violent antagonism to the Mahamedans, and they naturally more and more drew towards Hindooism, and re-adopted the tenets and the prejudices which they had once abandoned. Gradually the boundary line between Hindoos and Sikhs became ill-defined, till eventually the distinction of castes has been admitted, and a man may now become a Sikh without ceasing to be a Hindoo. In fact the Sikhs are held together by no religious, but by a purely, *political* bond. Some go the whole-hog, and become out-and-out Sikhs, some become Sikhs for the time being, or just as long as it suits their convenience, some stop half way, call themselves 'Sings,' and let their beards grow—are Sikhs among the Sikhs—Jats among the Jats—but the distinction of castes is retained by all. Moreover, we see that the Lahore political union is composed not of Sikhs alone, but of people of all creeds. Altogether, I think I may safely assert that no peculiar Sikh religious fervour has anything to do with the valour displayed by the Sikh army. It is a political union and nothing more. The Sikh army is courageous, not because it is Sikh, but because its ranks are filled from a population capable of making good soldiers. It so happens, however, that the Sikhs have practically all the advantage of uniformity of caste, and freedom from inconvenient prejudices, because almost the entire mass of Sikh soldiers are 'Jats,' a people who rank very low as Hindoos, but very high as soldiers. That is the real secret of their strength. The Sikhs are

for practical purposes a confederacy composed of '*Jats*,' and we are now opposed by the same people who opposed us at Bhurtpoor.

Still I admit that there have been Sikhs—taking their origin from and allied to the population, and whose characteristics are more political than religious—but still forming a separate class, and to some extent a dominant one. These are the Sikhs as they existed 50 years ago, and we must analyse the Sikhs of the present day to discover who are true Sikhs, and who are mere Jat soldiers, drawn from the Jat villages, servants of the Lahore State—passing as Sikh for the nonce—but really forming no separate or dominant class. I purpose to show that the valour and strength of the Sikh army lies in the latter class, that they can easily be absorbed in the population from among which they came, and, by a few years of good management, may be made to disappear altogether, or to appear only as useful citizens.

But as the *real* Sikhs came first in point of time, I shall dispose of them first. Previous to Runjeet Sing's time, when the Sikhs were a political tribe of more or less importance, they had a peculiar organisation of their own. They seized on all they could get, and divided it with reference to the number of horsemen furnished by each. They left their original humble homes in the villages of Malwal and Mangha—spread themselves over the country between the Ravee and the Jumna—and became a dominant class. They had, however, no common head. When they had possessed themselves of all that they could obtain, they turned their arms against one another, and the 'good old rule the simple plan' prevailed in its fullest extent, and was the recognised law of the land. I need not more particularly describe the Sikhs as they then existed, for this has often been done before. Suffice it to say that, as is usually the case under such circumstances, the strong took from the weak—the stronger became stronger—and from them that had little was taken even that they had.

However, many were the ups and downs of fortune till there arose that great centraliser, Runjeet Sing—the greatest enemy of the Sikh confederacy. He founded an Empire by extinguishing and absorbing the Sikh Misals. That Empire is called Sikh because its head was a Sikh, and many of his servants and soldiers were Sikhs; but it in reality rested on the same foundation as that on which Indian empires have rested from time immemorial; not a *national* feeling, but the mere personal and accidental possession of a tract of country, and the power derived from its revenues.

My opinion is that the Sikhs ended where Runjeet rose. They in fact regarded him little more favourably than if he had been a foreign conqueror. So far as his power extended he completely deprived them of their possessions and their power. His conquests were at the same time the cause of the remainder of Sikh-land being taken under British protection. The strong arm of our Government interposed in the territory east of the Sutlej—violent changes were no longer permitted—and the whole became stereotyped in the particular phase in which we happened to find it at the moment of our interference. It is in the protected States, not at Lahore, that we must look for perfect specimens of the Sikhs as they were. Indeed the Cis-Sutlej territory comprised the larger and more important portion of Sikh-land—and setting aside Pattecalee and the larger States, we have Misals, and Pattees, and many shared confederacies exactly as they were in the olden time—petrified and mummified, indeed, by long inaction—but as perfect as such petrifications can be. And it is the best proof that there is nothing inherently untameable and turbulent in the Sikh disposition—seeing that for forty years these real and genuine Sikhs have been as quiet and loyal as could be desired. Not even when the territory was invaded by the Lahore army did they in any instance attempt to be refractory. It will be remembered that I am talking of the

petty members of Misals and Pattees—not of the larger chiefs who individually held considerable territory on the same footing as other independent princes throughout India. The one or two instances of bad disposition occurred among the latter class, and I believe that their hostility was popularly somewhat exaggerated. I am far from advocating the grant of considerable revenue and consequent power to individuals—a course which is merely creating a dangerous power at the expense of the State; but I think that where 20 or 30 strapping fellows, whose trust is in their own right arms, can be quartered on one, or two villages, and thereby kept quite and contented, the arrangement is a good one—and the example of many such instances in the protected territory shows how such real Sikhs as remain in the Punjaub can be easily and cheaply provided for. I am not prepared to say what their numbers are, but I imagine that it cannot be great. Runjeet utterly dispossessed and extinguished the greater majority of them. These who remained were taken into his service and very much changed their character. During the whole of Runjeet Singh's reign they have been gradually disappearing. He established a regular army, he entertained in his service, without distinction, Sikhs, and Mahomedans, and Europeans; and he enlisted in his regular ranks the village 'Jats' of Malva and Mangha, who, serving a Sikh ruler, generally passed for Sikhs. But as I have already said, these people are quite different from the old Sikhs. They come from the villages on either side the Sutlej. They are members of the Jat village communities, and servants of the Lahore State, just as our Sepoys are in our regiments. One brother ploughs the paternal fields, while another has taken service at Lahore, and many have returned, both before and since the war, to resume their original functions. It is a remarkable fact that they really make the best cultivators. They are somewhat troublesome in their own villages—as people who have seen the world will be—are not always

willing to be controlled by their respectable elders—discover abuses and insist on reforms. But they exhibit no bad spirit. They have plenty of money wherewith to resume their agriculture, seem to have nearly enough of soldiering, and are well content to settle down. If they are but understood, if their grievances are attended to, and they are restored to that position in their villages, which they would have held had they not taken service, I make no doubt that the class will never be troublesome. Such are the *new* Sikhs—the flower of Runjeet's army, and our real opponents. Dissolve the Sikh army, and they are no more seen. Very different are the old Sikhs referred to above—the emasculated remains of a class which never in its best days could bear a comparison with Runjeet's regulars. They have but existed on his indulgence, and are found as Jagheerdar's Suwars, &c. They are not to be found in the ranks of the staunch infantry. They have existed too long to retain their virtue. A long course of idleness and opium has destroyed their energies, and they yielded the palm to young Sikh-land! Some among them may exhibit occasional courage and fanaticism, but it is not lasting.

This class then, I would, where necessary, dispose of by providing for them on a small scale like the Patteedars of the protected States.

To sum up the abstract of what I have said, is this—that the Sikh army is composed of two classes, the most important the regulars or new Sikhs—who will never appear without the nucleus of a regular army—and the irregulars or old Sikhs, much less important, who may cheaply be bought off. This I think will be found pretty near the truth. Of the old Sirdars some few entered on a new character under Runjeet, as servants of the State. Of these the most important is the Attareewalah family, now heading the opposition. It may be remarked, too, that the old Sikhs, driven to desperation, seem to do more this war than last. The regulars are reduced in numbers—but the Gorcharas who in '45-'46 never showed, this

year have done execution. However, it is like the flame which blazes before it is extinguished for ever. The majority of the servants of the Durbar, and of the Durbar itself, are mere creatures of circumstance utterly without a nationality. Tej Sing, the late Sikh Commander-in-Chief, is a Brahmin of Seharunpore, who served Runjeet and became a "Brahmin Sikh." From such people we have nothing to fear, nor need we go to any great expense in providing for them. In short, the Lahore monarchy is like any other native kingdom. If we do but dissolve it, in a few short years the place whereon it stood shall know it no more, and so I end my digression on the Sikh history.

ECONOMIST.

No. III.

MY LORD—12. When I digressed I was discussing the question of the difficulty which we should experience in keeping the Punjaub. This is in fact the most important point of all, and that on which the whole question turns, for it is the apprehension of this difficulty which has so long caused hesitation. "We are much afraid of the turbulence of the inhabitants. There might be peril in our imposing on ourselves the duty of keeping the whole territory in obedience to our rule." Thus reasons the cautious statesman. My object is to show that the difficulty—the turbulence of the inhabitants—is for the most part imaginary; that if we once make the Punjaub our own, and no longer leave the nucleus of a native army, that country may be kept with the greatest ease—almost as easily as our older possessions.

I have tried to show that the mass of the population is by no means turbulent—that they are, on the contrary, good cultivators and quiet subjects. I have explained my belief that the Sikhs of the present day may be divided into two classes, the old and the new Sikhs; that the real Sikhs are neither very numerous, nor very formidable, nor

absolutely intractable, but that such as exist in the Lahore territory may be easily provided for, and kept quiet like the Cis-Sutlej Patteedars; that the strength of the Sikh power consists in the new Sikhs of the regular army; that these form no separate class; that they are not individually turbulent by birth, education, and disposition; but merely in their collective capacity as the Pretorian guards of a falling empire—an army unbridled and uncontrolled since Runjeet Sing's death, and turbulent merely as all armies will be under such circumstances. I have stated that these men do, in fact, come of an orderly and industrious race—that each has his own place in his own '*Jat*' village community—and that they can and do return to their original occupation as cultivators of the soil. In this respect they possess a great advantage over the other military classes with which India has abounded. They have indeed a singular aptitude for agricultural pursuits which they have inherited as their birth-right—and they can be dispersed and absorbed not only *as* easily, but *very much more easily*, than any army which ever existed in India. If any (and they will be but a small proportion) still prefer military service to enjoying in retirement the good things which years of misrule have thrown into their hands, they may serve us just as well as they did Runjeet Sing. The Sikh frontier regiments have behaved well—and if but a small proportion of them are old soldiers of the Lahore army, it only shows that the handsome pay and easy service were not a sufficient inducement to draw out men well to do in the world, and who had had enough of soldiering. Lord Hardinge was determined to have Sikh regiments—and certainly the number of disbanded or resigned soldiers in our territory was very great; but one had married a wife—another had brought a field—a third was putting forth a claim to take place as one of the elders of his village—and the commandants of the new regiments (appointed before men were found) were obliged to go into the highways and by-ways, beating up in the villages for

recruits, and enlisting, as Sikhs, men who only became Sikhs on entering the corps. However, they are none the worse for our service for that. They are of the same class from which the Sikh soldiers sprung. I only mention the matter to illustrate what I have said of the origin and pursuits of the new Sikhs. I may add that a sufficient number of the native officers, &c., of these regiments are old Lahore soldiers, to show that there is no objection to their serving us and remaining faithful in trying times, where a sufficient premium in pay and promotion is offered to make it worth their while. But the fact is, they generally do not want service unless they are bribed into it. It is enough for us if we offer fair terms to such as cannot settle to any other occupation, and would otherwise become *mauvais sujets*; but their number is very small indeed.

13. I hope then that the facts which I have stated are sufficient to bear out my assertion, that the population generally will be easily managed, and that the Sikhs are by no means an insuperable difficulty. My facts are in some degree at variance with generally-received opinions, and to test them you must look somewhat deeper than the surface of Courts and Camps. For their correctness I must appeal to a careful investigation of the *interior* of the people. I have derived my facts from experience of the most *practical* description—I have been behind the scenes—I have lived among the people—I have have had to do with them in their villages—in their homes—and in their fields. My knowledge, such as it is, has come to me through no second hand—but is derived directly from the fountain head. It would be out of place in a letter like this to go into technical details of each class and caste and sub-division composing an Indian population. You can hardly find time to go into such particulars and must depend on testimony for the general result. Suffice it that I intimately know the different items of the population of Mangha and Malwa, and the countries from which the

Sikhs sprung, and over which they have ruled ; and I am thoroughly convinced that no population in India possesses a larger proportion of industrial elements and a smaller proportion of elements of an opposite quality. The old Indian system of village communities is yet in full force. Each has its own internal constitution—each is independent of the other—each pays its Revenue to the powers that be, and cares not to enquire too curiously the source from which that power was derived. Such is the people which I recommend to your adoption—and in the people I include the Sikh soldiers and other servants of the Lahore state who are drawn from the general population.

I have already said that I do not include the tribes of un-Indian race in the Western Hills ; therefore let not these be taken as an exception or objection to what I have said. I shall hereafter propose to draw the line so as to exclude these unprofitable clans—to make them over to their Native chief, to whom, as to every body else, they will be rather a source of weakness than of strength.

14. I have hitherto confined myself to the Sikhs, because they alone are new and singular ; but the Lahore Army and state (by state I mean the individuals who draw the Revenue of the country—their instruments and dependents) contains a large body of that miscellaneous class which is found in the service of every Indian power, doubtless much more numerous than the whole body of Sikhs real or nominal. Of them it would be useless to treat more particularly. Of such classes there has been abundant experience in the many states which have been absorbed in British India—and we know how speedily they disappear. The rapidity with which all traces of a former system melt away is marvellous. Many are the instances which could be pointed out in which, but a few years after the establishment of British rule, it is impossible by the minutest search to discover or imagine what has become of the component parts of a Native Government which was at one time dazzling and formidable to

look at. I would only warn you against mistaking for the *nobility* of the country paid servants of the state, for the most part aliens in blood and in feelings, and urge that it is unnecessary to expend the Revenue of the country in giving to such people a permanent provision, which can do no good, and may some day be turned to harm in their hands. Do not *buy* the consent of such people to a "treaty of annexation." Take a more straightforward and wiser course. In regard to those who have really some claim to be considered the *nobility* of the country—Sikh Chiefs, and Jagheer-possessing Sodies, Gooroos, &c.,—I would only say, keep them down as much as possible. A well satisfied and *unimpoveryished* nobility may be all very well to European notions, but, if we are to rule in Asia, we are much better without them. They have become separated from the population. If they retain their revenue, each becomes a petty state in himself and deprives the "*suzerain*" of his rightful revenues but to retain the power of doing mischief when opportunity offers. It is no question of "*property*." A portion of the revenue of the state has been made over to the favourites of the monarch, just as much as if it were a monopoly of sweet wines in Elizabeth's time, and when the state from which they drive it falls, they fall too. Such people should be reduced to a reasonable subsistence, so that they may neither be driven entirely desperate, nor retain more than is good for them and for us.

The petty Sikhs, the remains of the old confederacies of whom I have already treated, are a different class. They pretend to no more than a mere subsistence, and that, with or without service, it may be well to give them. The revenues of the Durbar, and of the fatter Chieftains, will be sufficient without trenching on the scanty pittances of these petty feudatories who have been already sufficiently reduced.

15. If then you are satisfied, that the elements of the Lahore state may be speedily dissolved like all the Indian

Empires which have preceded it—that the old Sikhs are but the shadow of their former selves, and neither difficult nor dangerous to deal with—that the new Sikhs are but individuals drawn from the general population—and that that population is neither turbulent nor troublesome—if, I say, you are satisfied on these points you must be convinced that there is no *internal* difficulty in keeping the Punjaub. I have made my statement and I leave it to you to verify my facts.

It is unnecessary to combat the argument, that the events of the present year stultify my reasoning. The Lahore State and Army has never been dissolved. That army is engaged in a last struggle for existence. I argue on the supposition that the Army is dissolved, and the Punjaub held by British Forces.

16. It remains to consider *external* difficulties to holding the Punjaub. These I believe to be very small indeed. The country beyond is one which yields little revenue, and supports but a limited population. It affords every facility for *defence*, but possesses not the resources of *offence*. Runjeet Singh in the Punjaub, and Sir Charles Napier in Scinde, have proved that the wild Hill tribes can be kept within their own limits. We know that the Affghans cannot cope with our Troops in the Field. They want resources—they want discipline—they want the munitions—and they want unity. The Sikhs could beat them well, and I have no doubt that in the open plain half a dozen British Regiments could utterly rout and disperse any Affghan Army which could be brought against them. In short, the Affghans are by no means formidable neighbours—and they know our power too well to be likely to precipitate themselves against it on equal terms. I have moreover little doubt that by bribing them with Peshawur, &c.—territories which would be no loss to us and add little to their strength—they might be made our allies and feudatories. We should then be too near to

leave it possible for them to coquet with Russia or other distant power. A wholesome dread, no less than benefits received, would effectually keep them in check. Although the length of frontier is great, the points at which invasion is possible are in reality few and far between, and those points and passes are easily guarded. I conclude then that we have nothing to fear from the Afghans and other tribes bordering the Punjaub—and that very moderate defences will suffice. To meet the Sikhs or other occupants of the Punjaub we must always be prepared with an Army of at least 59,000 men. A very much smaller number will be ample to repel the Afghans, &c.—and we have, therefore, in holding the Punjaub, a very great advantage in the matter of external defence. I have not referred to the defence against more distant and more powerful enemies, because that is not a local question, but one which concerns India in general. I shall, however, shortly have occasion to refer to the facilities of defence against such enemies as one of the advantages of the possession of the Punjaub.

I have considered, then, successively, the internal and external difficulties of keeping the Punjaub, and I come to the conclusion that neither the one nor the other are considerable, and that in fact the country may be easily kept.

I now proceed to specify the advantages to be derived from its retention.

17. The advantages of occupation I take to be as follows:—

I.—It is easier (and especially so in India where the principle of passive obedience to the powers that be is so universal) to hold in check a *disarmed* than an *armed* people. In the one case we must be prepared to keep in check the native rulers of the Punjaub, provided with all the materials, means, and appliances of war. In the other we have but quietly to reign over a submissive and subject people.

- II.—A considerable force must always be maintained on the Frontier of India. If this force occupies the Punjaub, the revenues of that country are available as an offset to meet a portion of the expense. If it is not occupied, the *whole* expense must be defrayed from the revenues of India within the Sutlej.
- III.—By taking the Punjaub we arrive at the natural boundaries of India, and obtain a final settlement of the question. If we do not, it is still an open question—again and again will difficulties arise—every year will bring changes of circumstances and renewed discussion—and we ~~shall~~ never rest till it is done.
- IV.—We shall be enabled to establish a sure defence against the hordes of Central Asia—and the Russians, or any one else who may have an eye to the East. With our out-posts at the mouths of the passes, it is absolutely and *definitely* impossible that any power can obtain entrance into India—whereas on the Sutlej we have no defence, and the slightest alarm must be the signal for a *preliminary* contest—a Punjaub war or a Caubul expedition.
- V.—Independent of the expense and anxiety of always keeping an army in the field, east of the Sutlej we have, as a question of humanity, to choose between a state of continual war and a secure peace. If we retire from the Punjaub to maintain a continually armed defence, the Punjaubees may be beaten back one year, but they will come again and again, and interminable bloodshed must result.
- VI.—Lastly comes the *reductio ad absurdum* argument—perhaps in this instance the most powerful of all. If we do not keep the Punjaub—what then? We must abandon the country and retire

—our prestige will be ruined—and our name will lose its spell. We shall have commenced a backward career. Is any one prepared to advocate this? I believe that it is impossible. We have gone too far—we cannot withdraw. The best reason for keeping the Punjaub is, that we cannot give it up—and it is an argument which no one gainsays. If any one will say that we should retire altogether, let him stand forth!

18. These are my reasons for retaining possession of the Punjaub. I think they explain themselves. It will be remembered that I am arguing on the *comparative* advantages of the only two possible boundary lines—I have premised that we must select either one or the other. Argument were superfluous to show that a divided military power cannot succeed. That has been a hope finally settled by our present experience. We must take one course or other, and, however little we may covet the Punjaub, I think it is hardly possible to avoid being convinced that occupation is a much less evil than a contrary course. I call it an evil as a concession to those who *will* view it in that light—but I do not myself think it so: and, be the existence of the country in itself an evil or a good it is enough for our purpose that we have, on the one hand, a quiet and disarmed country—yielding a considerable revenue—forming the natural boundary of India—and a sure defence against external enemies—peace secured to India—and the ignominy of retreat averted. On the other hand—an armed and *too* formidable neighbour, causing us great expense in the maintenance of an army of observation—and yet dividing with us the proper Empire of India—a stepping stone and an aid to foreign invasion—a source of continual bloodshed—and a lasting instance of our inability to cope with a persevering foe. Look on this picture, and on that. Say which you will choose.

19. To keep the thread of my argument I am obliged to go back many times, as in the matter of the house that Jack built; but it must be done—so I will remind you that I am discussing my first subject—“Is it expedient to keep military possession of the Punjaub?” That to that end I have shown—that we must get it whether or no—for we are now in the arena—that it is not very difficult to keep it—and that great *comparative* advantages will be derived from keeping it—all which being admitted I think we may fairly proceed—*therefore* it is expedient to occupy the Punjaub. *Quod est demonstrandum.* I hope we have settled that to our mutual satisfaction. The Punjaub must henceforth be held by British troops, and by British troops alone. No soldier of any native power must be permitted to exist. The occupation must be complete as to manner—no *concurrent*, but an *exclusive* possession—complete as to place—of no *portion* of the country, but of the *whole*—complete as to time—for no term of *years*, but for a *permanency*. Of all things—above all things—and before all things—keep continually in mind that there must be no half measures. Rather—a thousand times rather—retire from the country altogether than abate one iota of the *whole animal*. Have a startling taught to halloo in your ear unceasingly “no half measures”—“no half measures”—I believe you are now pretty nearly cut off from the *possibility* of compromise—so think no more of it. Look straight forward—consider that you have burnt your ships (or that the Sikhs have burnt them for you), and all will become easy.

So much for the military question. I shall leave the Civil Government to be touched on another day.

ECONOMIST.

No. IV.

MY LORD—If we retain military possession of the Punjaub, in what form should the country be governed? Directly by ourselves, or in a native form?

20. You may suppose, from the line I have taken, that I will no more admit the propriety of compromise in the form of civil government than on the question of military occupation. Lord Hardinge's most *directly* fatal mistake was military. If he had abolished the Sikh Army, and occupied the forts, appropriating the money saved to the payment of our troops, his scheme of governing in a native form might (if conducted with greater system and discretion than was always the case) have stood for a time. Still, to adopt half measures in civil affairs would be a blunder second in importance only to a similar course in military affairs. I am not one of those who believe that every native government is necessarily and invariably atrociously bad. The country may sometimes prosper under native rule, for it is an unexplained and inexplicable truth that natives generally like to be bullied *in moderation* in their own way, nearly as well as to be particularly cared for in ours. With some good points, the native system has many faults. Still, it cannot be denied that ours has also many and serious defects of inadaptation of the country, and it comes, like many other similar **questions**, to this, that a good European is better than a bad Native Government—a good Native Government better than a bad European Government. A Native Government may therefore be good or bad. A double Government is most assuredly and *unmitigatedly* bad. Of that be well convinced. It is simply a combination of the evils of either system without one redeeming point. If the Punjab must be abandoned, we know the extent of the evil, and another Runjeet may some day spring up; but if you attempt a double Government, the evil is a wasting canker. By all means adopt and engraft upon our own the best parts of the native system of administration, but attempt not to make *concurrent* two incompatible systems. It is the worst kind of political immorality, the worst time-serving, the greatest injustice to the country and to the people, which would sanction any such arrangement. The subject has been so often discussed in

this light, that it will not be necessary to go over very fully all the arguments on the subject. Certainly, all experience is against it, and of late, I am happy to say, almost all opinion too. Yet, strange to say, men often for long follow in practice that which has been already exploded in theory, and it is well that you should hold yourself warned against it, I hope and believe that the time for such things has gone by. It is almost the only *compromise* which is open to you, and it is doubtless tempting. Tej Singh and Deenanauth might be thus bought over to a new treaty, and the Duleep Singh and Brummagem morality difficulty would be got over in a way very satisfactory to Exeter Hall. But I hope that you are above such dishonest and shallow farces. You must be convinced that the treaty presents no real difficulty, and that it is your duty to act boldly for the best. You cannot neglect *all* experience, and I need not repeat the many often quoted instances. The latest experiment at Lahore itself is anything but calculated to encourage its repetition—and I believe that the fault lay much more with the system than with the individuals. Sir Henry Lawrence, in spite of all that has been said, is a man of talent and very great energy. Sir Frederick Currie is by no means a bad man of business. But neither had it in his power to introduce any *system*. In fact, the native Government was utterly disorganised, and no other was substituted. If there had been any plan of Government, proper officials would have been appointed and would have made the most of their plan. But the Resident and his Staff were to give advice—and that is a duty for which any one is good enough. It requires no particular qualifications. It is quite unnecessary that a man should have drugged in a Outcherry—or that he should know anything about the country respecting which he is to advise; or, indeed, that he should have any particular knowledge of anything at all. Nott's description of Politicals may be somewhat exaggerated, and there has no doubt existed in India a school of *Political* Officers of considerable exiper-

ence and merit in their own line—but I must say that the modern style of Political nondescripts, who cover the face of the Punjaub, I do not comprehend. I don't blame those who put their friends into the appointments. If Government choose to make appointments, the duties of which are perfectly undefined and unintelligible, and for which no qualifications in particular are required, I don't see why Lieutenant Jenkins, who is the Resident's friend's friend, should not be made a Political, rather than Lieutenants Smith, or Brown, or Jones, who are nobody's friends. Any man is good enough for a Political. It is one of the few things to which there is a Royal road, viz., through the columns of the *Government Gazette*. Hence it is exceedingly natural that half the ambitious young gentlemen of the Indian service should be quartered on the Punjaub where they are to distinguish themselves. It is a sort of "immortality made easy." Their numbers are now much beyond calculation. A few were made *pucka* Politicals—then came extra and temporary Assistants—then whole files were "placed at the disposal of the Resident"—and lastly, the barriers seen to have been burst, and all kinds of people have slipped, or pushed, or insinuated themselves into the Political Heaven. At least, so it would seem, for it is quite startling the way in which mysterious and hitherto unheard of Politicals start up in every corner, by twos and threes, to be chronicled in the pages of the *Delhi*—and, in truth, one way and another—getting up conspiracies or suppressing them—taking forts or keeping them—fighting battles and wiggling kardars—they have hugely illustrated themselves. Still I have yet to learn that the Punjaub is governed. I can compare the system to nothing but Monsieur Ledru Rollin's Commissaires. A Political is sent down to the provinces as a sort of Governor, Commander of the forces, Judge, and corrector of abuses—all rolled into one. The said Political knows about as much of the Revenue system, and of civil affairs in general, as he does of Chinese metaphysics. But it is no matter—that is quite a trifle—and

things are none the worse for that. A Political is a Political all the same—and he is omnipotent. He flies about from place to place. The kardars look on and admire. Still the twenty-two lacs is not paid up—the country is not contented—and the system is not understood. And it never will be otherwise with a double Government.

21. There is nothing on which so much depends as the feeling of self-responsibility. If the natives are left to themselves, they feel that everything rests with themselves, and they are not altogether depraved. Take away this feeling—support them with a military force—interfere vexatiously in their civil system—and they become but the corrupt instruments of a corrupt system. They lose all power of doing good, and but apply their remaining strength to do unmitigated evil for their own selfish and sordid ends. I utterly deny the *possibility* of a respectable native Government supported by our troops and over-ridden by our Politicals. If you take away the “*sanctions*” (to use a juridical phrase) to good conduct, you must also take away the power and reduce them to a subordinate position. Nor will it mend the matter to reduce the Political Staff. The natives cannot consider themselves the rulers of the country. They will look on their position but as a fortunate opportunity of acquiring plunder, and their exactions will but be more unchecked.

22. Another obvious suggestion would be to get a superior class of Political Officer, men who could really perform the duties assigned to them. But this, I fear, is impossible. In the first place, you can't define the duties, and they are so multifarious and peculiar that you could find few men really fit to perform them. Next, where you have no standard of qualification, you cannot prevent abuses.

No compromise will succeed. You must make up your mind. If you keep the Punjaub, it must be in our own name, and you must strive to do justice to the country, unhampered by treaties or by an exploded folly—in truth

both a crime and a blunder. To retain a native Government, is but to incur all the responsibility, anxiety, and difficulty of governing, without obtaining any of the advantages either to ourselves or to the country.

23. The expense is a powerful argument against a native form of Government. We must be prepared to maintain a Native Court—Native Chiefs—Native Pageants—half the revenue of the country must be wasted in Jagheers. In short, we must give up all hopes of deriving any considerable surplus revenue. On the other hand, if we take it into our own hands, the civil expenses may be kept within twenty per cent. of the gross income, and the remainder will be credited to the military department. We should, moreover, leave the materials of disaffection and rebellion, which in our own hands would be utterly extinguished. A native with money and followers, has always a certain power, and, though they could do nothing in the face of our regular army, they must be watched, and would distract us in time of need. The sort of quasi-national feeling which exists in a native state, the *esprit de corps*, and remembrance of more powerful times, would necessarily be retained.

The people of the country would not feel themselves thoroughly our subjects. They would be exposed to the evils of either system; they would be serving two masters. Unquiet and uncertainty must prevail, and all progress be much retarded.

24. But I know not why I should advance many arguments against the double system, for I have heard literally none in its favour, unless that to which I have already alluded, that it would enable you by a miserable subterfuge to plaster over the treaty, a course which I sincerely believe you will not stoop to. Otherwise I know no possible object which could be proposed by such a course. The general indisposition to the appropriation of territory which had long prevailed is wearing away. People begin to discover that, in a country where from

time immemorial might is right, we having the greatest might have also the best right—that when, in the fair course of war, we become possessed of territory lately held by the conqueror of a day, it is no accursed thing, but rather that which it has become our duty as well as our right to hold. We have ceased to acknowledge the divine right of Kings in Europe—and I never could discover why every Oriental Potentate, who yesterday deprived some one else—or rebelled against his liege master—or found the ground empty and quietly took possession—why every such individual should be considered to have an indefeasible, perpetual, unlimited right, of which he cannot be deprived but by the farce of pretended treaties. To act thus is but putting ourselves from the very best ground to the very worst. No sensible man would doubt our right to conquer India. No honest or honourable man would found his right to the country on the treaties drawn up for the edification of Europe. Runjeet Singh deprived his neighbours and founded a state. That state has gone to war with us. When we obtain the territory, seek not to found your right on treaties.

In regard to the particular treaty made by Lord Hardinge, it must be admitted that it was an absurd one. Duleep Singh, being a minor, could do no wrong—so that it was a one-sided obligation. All the Members of the Durbar and Chiefs who have any nationality have made one more struggle in the field. Duleep Singh is a prisoner—and no one will be so preposterous as to look on Deenauth and Tej Singh as the “State.” The treaty has therefore *ipso facto* ceased to exist.

Can you then hesitate? I hope that you will not. In whatever way and on whatever principles the territory may be administered, let it be avowedly and honestly on our own account. I would employ respectable natives, and I think that you may much improve by borrowing many thing from the natives, and dropping many things which we have hitherto considered essential. Into this

I shall go when I come to treat of the mode of administration. In the meantime I but advocate the straightforward course of declaring the country our own, to be administered as shall appear best for our own benefit.

ECONOMIST.

No. V.

ON THE DETERMINATION OF THE WESTERN BOUNDARY, CIVIL
AND MILITARY.

MY LORD—25. When I proposed to myself this subject, I had hoped to be able to obtain some assistance in working out the particulars—for I have not that intimate personal acquaintance with all the different tribes on the frontier which I could wish; nor indeed am I properly up in the minute details of the physical geography. I have not found the means of adding to my knowledge, but still I imagine I know enough of the main feature to guide me in suggesting the general principles on which I think that you should proceed, and I shall therefore adhere to the plan which I originally sketched out. Farther details you will doubtless have it in your power to command, when you come to the practical settlement of the question.

The plain of the Indus is bounded throughout by a mountainous country, and at this point there is also, as I have already noticed, a well marked ethnical line. A complete change of race takes place. The people whom we now meet differ in all their characteristics from the people of India. In India itself, although there are several Mahommedan classes professing the religion bearing the name, and in some degree assuming the character of foreign races—yet they have in fact, socially and morally as well as in their blood, become amalgamated in the country of their birth. In spite of outward differences, the Hindostanees are in essentials one people. It is very different when we overstep the boundary. The tribes surrounding Peshawur are other in their habits, in their political institutions, and in their whole development. They know

not the principle of *passive obedience*; they have not the same industrial organization. They are a vagabond race, who have a mortal aversion to pay rents, and a competent skill in the use of matchlocks and swords. A Yoosufzaee, with his peculiar appearance and language, trailing matchlock, dirt, impudence, and utter faithlessness, is about as unpromising and undesirable a subject as we could wish to find. Moreover, the country in which these tribes are found is far from productive. It never could yield a revenue which would pay half the expense of collection. You will, therefore, hardly think of extending your tax-collecting machinery into such unprofitable soil.

26. I do not think that it would be expedient or politic to exclude from our rule any portion of the country which properly forms part of India, and which at any rate includes all on this side the Indus. I know that rivers do not bound races—but it so happens that on the other side of the Indus come the hills, and the change of races takes place; so I may speak generally of the line of the Indus—leaving as I have said, farther details to be settled hereafter, and as a good Political and Police boundary line is here found, I think that the limit of our Civil administration may with advantage be fixed on or near this line.

27. It is not the least inconvenience of the peculiar and protracted style of warfare in which we have for so many months indulged, that our relations with the tribes which had been subjugated by Runjeet Singh have become very complicated. After having stirred them up to rebel against the Sikhs unassisted by our troops, how we are to persuade them to receive as the price of their exertions a yet heavier yoke I don't know. Abbott's Hazarehs and Edwardes' Pathans can hardly consider themselves to be fighting merely on our account. They look on it as an opportunity of regaining their inheritance. It is fortunate, therefore, that their position may enable us to get rid of most of them. Those beyond the Indus we must make over to some one else—and in regard to the few on this

side I suspect the cheapest course will be to excuse them altogether from the payment of *rent*. That is the best chance of securing their affections—or if it don't do that, they will at least always be so hard at work fighting among themselves for the proceeds, that they will have no time to give us any trouble.

28. The first hilly country is that between the Jhelum and Attock. This is undoubtedly an integral part of India and must be held. It may not be a paying country, but you cannot grudge a moderate expenditure for the possession of the very gates of Hindoostan. It is a sort of outwork against all enemies—and there are no serious difficulties in the way of its retention. Its extent is not very great, and our Frontier forces might be cantoned within its limits. They would have the Indus in their front—and for *defence* the nature of the country is an *advantage*. In one portion of this territory are the Hazarehs, whom Goolab Singh could not manage, and who have consented to rebel under Abbott against the payment of their Revenue to the Sikhs—for that is the real nature of the defence which Abbott has carried on so well and successfully. A refusal to pay is one of the few favours which they will always be ready to grant on the least encouragement, and as we can't decently ask them to pay up now, we must just conclude the matter by removing the bone of contention and exempting them from rent as I have above suggested, and they will then give little trouble. They cannot be made over to Goolab again—after what has passed—and though in regard to that Potentate what is done is done, and I am not going to re-open that question, it would hardly do to entrust him with the keys of the gate of India. He might some day take a bribe and let in some one whom he ought not. I don't know that the arrangement of setting him up was bad. His country would not pay, and when we advance to Attock it will be isolated. But he must be an insulated feudatory—not a dangerous frontier power. We must ourselves hold the country up to the Indus.

29. But what are we to do with Peshawur and the other similarly situated territories? They are eminently subject to the disadvantages which I have pointed out. They have no defence, but are exposed to invulnerable assailants—the dwellers in the hills. Every one who has held them has been constantly in hot water. The Revenue must each crop be collected by Regiments of Infantry, and order (or rather disorder) must be kept by shifts utterly beneath our dignity. It is, therefore, highly inexpedient to attempt to hold in our name the territory in the outskirts of the hills.

But although it is not easy to hold this territory, it is very easy to invade and at any time take possession of the sub-montane portion of it. It cannot maintain a regular army of any strength. While, therefore, our cantonments are on the Indus it is completely at our mercy.

I would take advantage of this state of things to turn it to account in another way. I would bribe Dost Mahomed into friendship by giving him as a “fee” from us, and on condition of an alliance offensive, and defensive the whole or most of the country between the Indus and his own possessions, I think this better than giving it to some separate Chief, because in the one case the advantage would be but negative—the getting rid of a losing concern; in the other we should have the very positive, and considerable advantage of gaining a direct and powerful hold on the Cabul Chief. Holding his best territory at our pleasure, we should but look to his feeling of self-interest, and we might reasonably demand important concessions in virtue of our gift. Sultan Mahomed has committed himself, but the “*Dost*” has not. He, of course, has taken Peshawur and Attock from *our enemies*—and I dare say he will be reasonable enough. He will rather take Peshawur, &c., as a gift than fight for them, knowing that to fight would be hopeless. I would, therefore, when you have beaten the Sikhs, propose to Dost Mahomed to accept the territories alluded to on the following conditions:—

1. They are held as a fief of the British Crown, and homage done accordingly.

2. An alliance offensive and defensive—our enemies to be his enemies, and our friends his friends.

3. An Ambassador to be received at Cabul as between two friendly powers.

4. The Suzerain to have the privilege of marching through the territory to blockade the Khyber Pass, when such a step shall seem necessary.

5. The Dost distinctly to understand that he will be well served out if he is faithless.

Imagine there could be little doubt of the acceptance of these terms; and I say that, if the arrangements were carried out, our frontier would be much better and more cheaply secured than is otherwise possible.

The accession of territory would not be sufficient to render the Afghans a dangerous power. In fact, it would give them more work at home. The revenues would not be very large, and must always be fought for. The Dost would still be unable to support an efficient regular Army—and his irregulars never would dare to attempt to cross the Indus in the face of our troops. On the other hand, it would no longer be in his power to intrigue with foreign States. Our Ambassador in his Capital, and our troops close at hand, he would be too closely watched. No danger could approach us without ample warning, and abundant opportunity for making the moderate preparations which would be required. I therefore strongly urge that we take as much as is good for us, fix our proper boundary on the Indus—secure an ally with the remainder, and so we shall, at the same time, bound and protect with outworks our Indian empire. I commend my plan to your consideration. As I have gone so far, I will proceed one step farther, and suggest an Ambassador to Cabul. I would name Major Mackeson. Injustice was done to that officer in his last appointment. It was one to which neither his previous experience nor the bent of his genius disposed

him. But he is now employed in a way in which he is well fitted to shine, and if Government avail themselves of his services in the right way, he may yet add to a distinguished name. He is a man of *wonderful* temper and sound judgment; a remarkable linguist, and perfectly at home among the natives; the very picture of a real Political Officer. He may not indulge in sudden and original flights; but whatever he does he is sure not to go far wrong; and this, of all others, is the man for a diplomatist. I am not comparing him with Sir H. Lawrence. They are two totally different characters, and each shines in a way the opposite of the other. If I may so express it, they are "*incommensurate*" quantities. But I think there can be no doubt of Mackeson's peculiar fitness for an embassy to an independent power, and I have no doubt that he would succeed at Cabul.

30. One word on Military details. As in civil matters, I would draw the boundary line at the Indus, and advance a Political outpost by opening relations with Cabul—so in the Military dispositions, I would post the main line of defence on the Indus, and would set down as a suggestion (leaving its propriety to be determined by those better qualified to judge such matters), the propriety or possibility of throwing out a small advanced post—an outlying picket in the shape of a moderate and easily garrisoned Hill Fort, at the mouth of the Khyber—a sort of Porter's lodge, where would be kept the key of the gate, and admittance given or refused as we should desire. This would, of course, depend very much on the expense; but if we go about it in the right way, and avoid too large a scale, I imagine that, at an expense very moderate for the object to be effected, a Fort might be established in which a small garrison could bid defiance to the surrounding tribes, and could hold out against an invading power till relieved. We have seen to our cost at Mooltan the strength which fortifications give to an otherwise

contemptible Force. The Khyberees, few in numbers, and insignificant in themselves, have always been *invincible* from the accident of holding the passes, and, from Alexander to General Pollock, no one has passed, but by paying them. If we have not secured a footing, it might on an emergency come to a question of bidding against another power for the possession of the pass, and we might be outbid; whereas, if we have a paramount post, it can be at any time reinforced, and for *defence* we are independent of the Khyberees. The nature of the country is so favourable, that some hill could easily be crowned, provisioned, and garrisoned with the wing of a regiment, which would be perfectly secure against a sudden assault. Witness the defence of Ali Musjid with a mere handful of men during the Cabul outbreak.

I would select the site on the *nearest* defensible point. It could thus be at any time approached from this side and yet would give complete command of the pass.

The arrangement would be one which my proposed relation with Dost Mahomed (holding the country up to the Khyber as a fief) would quite justify; nor would it complicate our position, for the garrison would be perfectly isolated, and interfere in nothing so long as we are at peace with the Affghans. It would be quite secure against irregular assaults of unruly tribes, and if we should ever go to war, it is much better that we should find ourselves in so advantageous a position. We should but close the pass—send a division to occupy Peshawar, and reinforce the garrison of the Fort, and there would be complete defence. The Fort would always be a nucleus on which to base, if necessary, more extended operations.

It would be quite unnecessary to keep up a line of “communications” with the Fort. So long as we are at peace, the customary reliefs would take place in terms of the treaty—if we go to war, it would hold out quite long enough for our purposes. However this project is as it

may be. It will not affect the disposition of the larger bodies of troops, and the principal cantonments will doubtless be on the left bank of the Indus. The advantage of the river in our front, is, that we are thus saved from all little war. The sub-montane country is left to the possessors of the hills, and it is not necessary for our troops to turn out against every robber chief or band of plunderers. We are separated from these people by a clear line, and till an invading foe attempt, or propose to attempt, the passage of the Indus, we need not fire a shot. Nor is any such foe likely to reach that river. If invasion is attempted, the troops march out of cantonments, and blockade the passes a few marches distant. Altogether, I think that the Indus is a most desirable boundary, political and military, and believe that, if our relations beyond the river are skilfully managed, India may be at peace on her Western Frontier for many a long day.

ECONOMIST.

No. VI.

MY LORD—I am perhaps premature in my present subject but I am not without hope that a battle may be immediately followed by a proclamation of annexation, and therefore it is well to be beforehand with those parts of my subject which must be decided at once. It might be more regular to particularise the work to be done before detailing the machinery which is to do it; but as in practice the machinery will come first—as you will first make the necessary appointments and issue your fuller instructions as you find opportunity to do so—I shall *commence* with a chapter on the machinery, with a few hints respecting things to be avoided—and shall hope that, a little time hence, matters may be in such train as to enable me to proceed more fully into the principles which I would urge—and the Political—the Police—the Revenue—the Judicial system.

2. In arranging your administrative machinery, the great object (and that which has hitherto been most neglected) is to establish some regular *system*—a consistent—intelligible—working—centralising *system*. It has been too much the custom to make a number of appointments at hap-hazard, without any reference to the *relative* proportion, fitness, and correspondence of the different parts. The consequence has been that too much has depended on the character of individuals. One district is in one man's hands, and is managed according to his ideas; another, in another man's hands, is managed on entirely opposite principles. One commissioner interferes with his subordinates too little; another too much; and in too many instances there has been a total want of any *active* head of the whole—any general superintendence or centralisation whatever.

When the N. W. provinces were first taken possession of, a regular commission was appointed—a system was observed; and it may be remarked that, to the present day, these provinces are much ahead of any other part of India. There generally *has* been some attention paid to them, and the consequence is that the Agra Presidency is far in advance of Bengal, though a much later acquisition. But subsequent lapses of less importance have been differently treated. They have never been properly attended to—have remained neglected appendages of the supreme Government—and each has been fashioned at the caprice of an individual. Of all things avoid this. Try to centralise. Be careful that you do not put on one man duties which one man cannot perform; that, because a man is excellent in one line, you do not impose on him other duties of a different, if not incompatible, description. Provide an efficient head for an efficient system—not a *nominal* superintendence. Next, let the course of administration flow from the superintending head to the actual executive instruments as *directly* as possible. Every

intermediate link—everything that renders more distant the extremities of the machine—tends to weaken its operation and disconnect its parts. Refine not too much—abolish superfluous grades—have but one power to direct, another to execute. With but a nominal superintendence and a chain of subordinate grades, no uniformity can exist.

3. As the directing power in the Punjaub, I advocate a commission. I do not think the work can properly be done by one man. There is too much of it, and it varies too much in its details, to admit the belief that you can find any one man capable of getting through it all as it should be done. One man is possessed of energy—another of a judicial talent—a third of revenue details; but you seldom find them all united. Besides, as I propose to dispense with intermediate grades, and to centralise the superintendence in one point, it will be evident that the mass of business will be quite sufficient to occupy two or three individuals. The advantage of a board will be, that it gives unity, and yet leaves the power of apportioning the departments. You can thus have the best men of each department uniting their labours in a common centre. If the departments were separate they would clash. You must have one power; but it may be composed of two or three members. It were useless to multiply instances; and if experience on the N. W. frontier had not already proved the impossibility of one man doing justice to all departments, a very cursory examination may soon convince you of the fact. For how great is the difficulty and importance of the several subjects, each of which is sufficient to occupy, and will occupy for a long time to come, the best men you can find. Are not the political relations of the frontier territory most delicate and complex, and must not one man give much attention to this subject? Of our Indian police, we only know the lamentable fact that it is no police; that the amount of crime is in exact proportion to the length of our possession. We

have the Thuggee system to show that a police is *possible*. Its *general* adaptation remains, and to commence a better system in so large and important a country as the Punjaub, would be worthy the exclusive efforts of *any* man. Of the judicial system, it must be admitted that great and growing evil results from our Anglo-Saxon ideas ; that we must not be hampered by rules of evidence ; that the grand aim must be to discover the guilty—not as in England, only to protect the innocent. What so fair an opportunity of reform as in commencing afresh in a new country ? And is not this a labour worthy of *one* man ? Our Indian revenue system has attained considerable perfection—but it is not learnt in a day. Its adaptation to, and introduction into, a new territory will sufficiently occupy, for some years, the best revenue officer you can get. The military details of the Punjaub will be novel and important, and some one must be charged with *this* duty. In short, to administer the country at all, you must have more than one individual ; and to do justice to it, you must select several of the best officers to be found in India in the several departments.

4. There can be no greater error than to suppose that any one can administer new territory while the good men are drudging in our older provinces. In fact, new territory, more than any other, requires the very best men ; and it would be better that an exchange should be made, and new men sent to old appointments, than that new men should fill new appointments. The first few years of our possession is the critical period which determines the character of a district ; and a little money spent in obtaining efficient heads to the administration, and introducing an efficient system, will be well spent. Countries, too like children, are always aptest and most teachable in their infancy ; and if, in the first years of the British Punjaub, you can lay the foundation of an improved administration, which, if it succeeds, may be extended to less fortunate

provinces (having to unlearn as well as to learn), why then you, my Lord, will have deserved well of your country, and your reign will be an era in India.

I have already argued that the country is not necessarily unruly and turbulent, and I beseech of you not to abandon it to the capricious rule of any man, however distinguished in his way. Pay attention to the subject yourself. Do justice to it, and it will well repay you. You will not suppose, from what I have said, that I argue in favour of selecting men merely because they have had *experience* in our older provinces. We want something more than this. Experience gives habits and talents of business; but the previous system is by no means perfect, and you must therefore discover men who have also enlarged views of general polity, who deduce from their experience of what *is* rational views of what *ought* to be. You want not men of forms, but men of action—not lawyers, but jurists—not collectors, but men who understand fiscal affairs.

5. And now for the *personel* of the “Board of Commissioners for the affairs of the Punjaub.” First, will naturally present himself, Sir Henry Lawrance; a very good man in his line, though, like every body else, he can’t be universal.

It is a delicate subject to discuss his character. Controversies always run to extremes, and his admirers have made him absolute perfection, while his detractors show him to be all that is bad.

The truth is, that it is as absurd to deny him great energy, knowledge of the Sikhs, and of the countries on the N. W. frontiers of India, and a large share of natural talent, as it is to assert, that he is a man of particularly *mild* temper, or to suppose that he (or indeed any other man under the circumstances) could, single handed, and, in addition to his other duties, found and carry out an entire administrative and judicial system in a great country. His dress I need not here enter upon. Of his manner is

will only say, that it *seems* extremely improbable that he should have made such a blunder as to conduct himself in the way described by one writer, and I think the disclaimer of his assistants sufficient on that point. Of his temper, I may safely assert that the fact of his being a man of decidedly violent temper, is notorious and certain; and when the controversy raged, the great mistake of his admirers was in absurdly denying what is clear as noon-day, and so throwing discredit on their otherwise strong case. Still, I don't think this by any means a *fatal* defect, so long as Sir Henry keeps a decent curb on himself, and so regulates the time and place of his ebullition, as not to cause irreparable evil. That such instances have, or do occur, must be shown by specific proof. I am not aware that they have. Indeed, I consider his temper an essential part of the man; without that, it would be the part of Hamlet omitted. A very mild man is seldom very energetic. Wilfulness is the very soul of energy, and, in my opinion, energy covers a multitude of sins. Lawrence was a famous man before he was a great one, and on his previous fame his popular reputation chiefly rests. His subsequent career, and what he did for Lord Hardinge, and was made a K. C. B. for, rests between him and Government. I don't think he was a man for half measures, if higher powers were willing to consent to whole ones. At any rate he managed the Punjaub for two years, and must have large experience. In civil details, his experience is of a very limited description; but he will have enough of other matters on his hands, and, in virtue of his qualifications as well as of his present position, he would of course be one of the commissioners.

For another Commissioner, I would suggest your making it worth the while of Mr. Henry Lushington. He is just the kind of man you want; great natural talent, combined with great experience, and yet not bound down by the trammels of previous habit. He is a citizen of the world, and a man capable of *originating*—much too good for the

Sudder—that asylum of old women. It would be hopeless to suppose that he can ever raise the Sudder. Everything must be re-cast before that can be done. Better, then, do not harness him to the heavy waggon, which has already irretrievably stuck in the mud, but make him one of your new leaders, and start the Punjaub machine on a fresh score.

For a third Commissioner (if, as is probable, it is found necessary) pick out the best Revenue Officer in the N. W. Provinces—not a mere technical man, but a man who really *understands* his work, and if he has any experience of new territories, it will be an immense advantage. I am not at this moment prepared to say *which* is the best man, but you may doubtless find out. If it were not for being all Lawrences again, perhaps, considering Mr. John Lawrence's late experience, he would be as good a man as any.

I would make the General Officer commanding the troops in the Punjaub an *ex officio* member of the Board.

In selecting a Secretary to the Commissioners you would have an opportunity of infusing the best of the younger blood at your command.

6. I forgot to say what would be some compensation for the expense of so formidable a Board, that the present Cis and Trans Sutlej Territories would naturally be incorporated with the Punjaub. These territories have not hitherto been governed. They have been an appanage to the Resident at Lahore when the Resident has other fish to fry, and there has been no uniformity in their management, nor sufficient attention paid to them. They would, equally with the Punjaub, benefit by the new system, and the country managed by the Board would then be equal to a Government, and in its present critical circumstances more important, requiring greater care and greater attention to details than most Governments. That such a country should be governed without a sufficient provision, such as I have suggested, is not to be supposed. It would

be equally unjust to the Punjaub to refuse it a fair start, and to the Sutlej territories to let them continue in their hitherto neglected state.

7. A sufficient Board being provided and set in working order, I would, in pursuance of what I have already said, dispense for the most part with intermediate grades, and go direct from the Board to the actual executive Officers in charge of districts. There is, however, one duty of the very first importance to which I have adverted above, and which, from its nature, must be performed by one Officer, either one, of the members of the Board or a separate appointment—I mean the Superintendence of Police. It is only by uniting the strings in one hand that any system of Police can be attained. You cannot have a Police in each district. It must be one throughout the whole country to give any chance of success. Nor can it ever be properly attended to by a man who has other duties, and regards it as but a secondary consideration. It is the most difficult department of all, and which most needs amendment, and the Police of the Punjaub will be as difficult and important as that of any country in India. You must then have a Superintendent of Police who will, through the Magistrates, work the Police all over the country, as the Superintendent of Thuggee does his system all over India.

8. In apportioning executive districts, I think you should make them as large as you conveniently can, with the view of securing one good man with a sufficiency of assistants to the charge of each. Both a better management is thus obtained and much labour is saved. In practice it is almost as easy to superintend a large district as a small one. The same establishment, the same forms, and the same general rules, apply to both. The Board will also have a much easier task than if the country were split up into very many small and indifferently officered districts—and there will be a considerable saving in expense. The inconvenience to the people will be but very slightly increased—for all who know the perseverance and

long-suffering of suitors must be well aware that to walk a few miles additional is a comparatively *very* small hardship. For instance, a district with a 40 miles radius, would contain nearly double the area of a 30 mile radius—yet but a portion of the population would have to walk 10 miles farther—and it could be better worked at a smaller per centage of expense. I would therefore have the districts at least as large as those in the provinces.

9. The *executive* power, especially in a new country, cannot be divided. It would not do to separate Magistrates and Collectors, as in Bengal; for though the departments may be separately *superintended*, in the Executive to work properly they must be worked together—both that they may play to one another and that clashing may be avoided. The duties may be advantageously distributed, but one man must be master of all, and responsible for all.

10. The selection of Executive Officers is a task which requires much care. Having settled to have large districts, I assume that you can afford to pay them well, and get the best men. Unfortunately, people are too apt to run to extremes. You must avoid first the violent “anti-regulation” man—who will be guided by no rules of business or system—or orders whatsoever—but does or omits to do everything simply because it is forbidden or enjoined by rule. Such characters are not uncommon in non-regulation provinces, and once on a time the N. W. Frontier Agency seems to have exhibited some fine specimens of independent dispensers of justice. On the other hand, you must equally avoid violent “*regulation*” men—who without the least regard to the circumstances of the country or the fitness of things, forthwith turn every thing upside down, and will have all things immediately cut according to the pattern provided by the Sudder, for a very different state of things. They at once destroy all that has previously existed, and they generally signally fail in substituting anything manageable in its room. Too

many men are of one or other of these two classes ; but you must find those who have on the one hand learnt habits of business, discipline, and subordination—and on the other have a tolerable share of common sense—can temper rule with reason—who do not blindly run through or against everything, but steer with an eye to the ground before them. I dare say that a sufficiency of such men can be found if you look for them. In appointing their assistants and subordinates, I would only ask you to remember that those who can't perform certain duties in other parts of the country, can't do so in a new territory. In fact, you should send *selected* men, not the worst or the most untried. Many people are sent to exercise power which would nowhere else have been committed to them for years. In my opinion, no one should be entrusted with powers in a new territory till he has proved his capability by exercising them satisfactorily somewhere else.

11. The same remarks apply to Uncovenanted appointments. There can be no greater mistake than making these a provision for young gentlemen who can't get anything better—without any standard of training, experience, of fitness. These appointments should be filled in the first instance by drafts from the provinces—where new hands would fill their places and be duly tested. It is difficult enough to *make* a new district under any circumstances—but when the instruments must be made first and the work done afterwards, it is a Herculean task, and the whole is thrown back for years. Of the subordinate native establishment I shall speak when the “annexation” is out, and I come to details.

12. In the meantime I have only one more piece of advice to offer. Let your first instruction to the new functionaries be—destroy not what you find in existence till you are prepared to substitute something better in its place. Do not sweep away every vestige of the native system, while you are unprepared with the means of properly

starting a system of your own. Do not drive away every respectable kardar, and substitute the first disreputable rascal who presents himself, merely because the latter is willing to dub himself Tehsildar or Thanadar. In the first place, take things as you find them. Make the most of the native system of accounts, &c., &c. Before you advance another step, first *thoroughly understand* facts as they are before you. Then *digest* your plans, and introduce your changes and reforms rationally, and with your eyes open. A change of name does not produce a new system—and creating a chaos is not necessarily the first step towards creating order. Yet *this is too often the course pursued*, as if no previous Government had existed; and the consequence is, that it is only by long and painful groping in the dark that a faint light is again obtained. Let it, then, be your maxim not precipitately to *undo* till you are prepared to *do*. What you should do—what undo—and what leave undone, I may be prepared to advise you at a more convenient season.

ECONOMIST.

GENERAL.—No. VII.

MY LORD—I had hoped that the Punjaub question must have been decided, and I had anticipated from all the signs of the times that it could be decided but in one way. I had looked to discussing the questions which will arise *after* annexation: but for the present I am disappointed. It seems that I have overrun my game, and I must reluctantly retrace my steps. I am possessed with grave fear that your path has not yet been sufficiently smoothed—that annexation is even yet a stumbling block to you. Why this hesitation? Why this delay? Why this mystery as to the result? Can it be, after bearing the heat and burden of the day—after running all risks and achieving a complete though tardy and hard fought success—you *now* hesitate? You were bold enough at one

time—when you first approached the scene of action, it was believed that you were all for the one plain and resolute course. Has your courage deserted you at the eleventh hour? Have you reached the barrier, and do you fear to leap? Is the prize within reach of your arm, and do you fear to seize it? Surely, surely, my Lord, the “native hue of resolution” has not been “sicklied o’er with the pale cast of thought.” Then, indeed, has an “enterprise of great pith and moment” its “current turned away and lost the name of action.” “There is a tide,” you know—and now is the turn of your tide—a fine spring-tide too—so I beseech you to make the greatest possible expedition and get into harbour. If you lose it, you will be again carried out to sea, and many sore buffetings you will have before you regain the haven.

They say that you are waiting for orders from home. If this is the case, you disappoint expectation. Do you seriously for a moment suppose that if you, the Governor-General of India, fear to assume the responsibility of annexation, the Home Authorities will consent to do so? They neither will nor ought. Your position and office make it chiefly your province to determine—situated as you are on the scene of action. The idea of referring it to those whose information is several months behind the event, and whose knowledge of the subject is most obscure and imperfect, is absurd. Seek not, then, to shift or divide the responsibility. By you should it be borne, and you must bear it. You may anticipate the contents of your despatches. They will but consist of an endless array of *ifs* and *buts*. *If* the Punjaub is to be annexed, *you* must annex it. *If* it is to be released, *you* must release it. The credit of success will rest with you. With you must rest the blame of another failure. To you all India looks for a display of the requisite moral courage. The best orders you can receive are those which contain *nothing*. Lord Wellesley went to the other extreme. He used to detain the ships, that the Court might hear nothing of his proceedings till too late to alter them. You may not be quite

prepared to imitate him. Yet he lived to receive thanks and a more substantial reward from this said Court ; and you may do well to temper an excess of prudence with a little intermixture of his energy.

But, my Lord, you have brought with you a distinguished reputation. Expectation stands on tiptoe ; and we will hope from you better things than hesitation, uncertainty, and delay. Do but avoid that "pale cast of thought." That is what mars everything. You may depend on it that first resolutions are generally the best. A man's natural impulse leads him to what is right—"pale thought" makes him vacillate between right and wrong, but he had better return to his first impulse in the end. I well know the feeling ; and so do most men. I believe that your first thoughts were for annexation. Then be not oppressed with doubts and fears and strange fancies. Do what you believe to be right, and trust to your friends for the reasons.

Considering the prejudice which exists in England against extension of the empire, you may naturally be anxious to secure an unanimity of opinion in this country before taking so important a step as annexation : and opinion seems all but unanimous. I understand, however, that Sir Henry Lawrence is opposed to it. Now, I would not for a moment be supposed to impugn the purity of that gentleman's motives, but I beg of you to remember that not only was he a principal artificer in the settlement which has just broken down, but under present arrangements he is King of the Punjaub. As then, human nature is but human nature, you must regard Sir Henry not so much as an unbiassed adviser and a potentate pleading his own cause. By all means hear what he has to say ; but receive it with caution as the argument of an advocate. It would be well, too, if you admit an advocate on one side to retain one on the other, to sift and combat Sir Henry's arguments, and give the other side of the question a fair chance.

To another opinion of Sir Henry's I would not be so tolerant. It is said that he has come back to declare that the "Sikhs had been exceedingly ill used," and that if he had stayed there would have been nothing of the kind. Now this is, really, too much. Anything more entirely without foundation it is impossible to conceive, and the assertion is a most unfair one—for his policy was carried out to the letter; and if poor Sir Frederick Currie did wrong, it must have been in *too implicitly* following in the footsteps of his predecessor. It is perfectly clear that the origin of the late struggle was the existence of a Sikh army and Government. The outbreak was a mere question of time. A storm brings a calm, and the prostration of the first campaign was followed by a couple of years peace; but the reaction follows. Sir Frederick carried out in its minutest details the system which Sir Henry had left him, and perhaps the carriage and temper of the former was less likely to provoke resistance than that of his predecessor. Even the particular affair, out of which grew the present, had its origin in Lawrence's time. It was determined to relieve Moolraj before Sir F. Currie joined, and even the deputation of the unfortunate Mr. Vans Agnew had been arranged. That I *know*.

Altogether, I think that if Sir H. Lawrence says that the Sikhs were ill used after his departure, the charge is ungrateful and unfair. What his energy might have done in nipping the rebellion in the bud is another matter. If he had done so it must have been but to break out at another place. The banishment of the Ranee is an absurd handle. Not one of the Chiefs cares in the least for the Ranee, or for any one but for himself. Any one of them would, with all the coolness in the world, hang the Ranee on a tree, if he could be advantaged thereby. It may suit them to talk of the Ranee *now*, but no one will be so weak as to believe that they care more for her than for the other Ranees and Rajas whom they have murdered. If the general feeling of insecurity, caused by such banishments

be alleged, I say that Lall Singh's was a still more remarkable instance, and in that Colonel Lawrence had a part.

I know not what scheme the present Resident now propounds. Perhaps a contingent. I can only again hope that the time for such things has gone by. A contingent is no new scheme. It is as old as British India, and I leave you to judge whether the result has been favourable—whether all experience and all public opinion is not against it. It is a scheme for taking all the risks and responsibilities of occupation without the advantage of ourselves governing—of making the people our own subjects—and doing justice to those whom Providence has committed to our care. It is the economy of having irregular and local troops in preference to regular ones—and the extravagance of sacrificing the revenues of the country to the drones of a native Court, instead of drawing them ourselves! It is the gross immorality of condemning a conquered country to perpetual discord, plunder, and misgovernment, without advantage to ourselves. It is the folly of leaving on our frontier the embers of once powerful fires. Were the country surrounded by our territories they might continue to smoulder, but touching as it does that country from which previous invaders of India have issued, another conflagration may at any time be kindled. For many reasons, I cannot conceive that you will adopt such a course.

But what more can I say? I can myself imagine no argument in favour of half measures—no *one* advantage, real or imaginary—and I cannot guess what Sir H. Lawrence may allege. I must repeat that you will do well not to give ear to *ex parte* arguments. Your immediate advisers, having no personal knowledge of the facts, cannot be prepared to controvert those of the Resident, and it is very easy to have the best of it when a man has all the talk to himself, and nobody to gainsay him. If then you wish to get at the real state of the case, you

should, before adopting the Resident's views, make them patent to others, who have had opportunities of judging, and who may entertain opposite opinions. When you have heard both sides you may settle your facts, and then draw your conclusions, without fear of error.

One fallacy I may suggest. It is absurd to suppose that the Sikhs or the inhabitants of the Punjaub will be better pleased with a contingent and double government, than with annexation. The population will not be better pleased; for they will be subjected to hard task-masters instead of mild ones. The Sikh soldiers high and low will not be pleased; for their occupation is gone all the same, and they had rather cultivate under an easy system than under a grasping one. The Jats and Jat Sikhs are *particularly partial* to our revenue system, and to the zemindaree rights which we accord them. Then why should they prefer a contingent and misgovernment to annexation and a regular system? The petty Sikhs of the olden race, if deprived of their swords and of the privileges of anarchy had much rather enjoy in peace and security under our guarantee a little rent-free land. One class, and but one class (if class they can be called) would benefit by a double government, the vultures which prey on the carcase of every Indian state—the creatures of the Durbar. To such a class will you sacrifice all conscience and all policy—all regard for the rights of the governed, and the interests of the governing?

If Sir Henry Lawrence still stands in the way of annexation, I would say, rather than "turn awry" a great enterprise, compromise the matter. For the civil government associate with him Mr John Lawrence. The latter, from all I hear, is an excellent Officer though he *is* a Lawrence, and perhaps some of those who decry him might with advantage profit by his instructions. He is wrong perhaps in some things—may occasionally rather bully people without any corresponding advantage to Government, as when he insists on substituting *money payments*

for jagheers or rent free lands to those who would be well contented with *half the value in land*, but detest money payment, and are in consequence discontented subjects with the power of doing mischief. But generally he well understands his work, and he has abundant energy to render useful his knowledge. He is neither a genius utterly ignorant of his work, nor a sluggard to whom experience avails not—but a man *bred to the trade*—of good talents and great energy. We want more of such men, and you need not be deterred by a little roughness and hastiness. Family compacts are in themselves an evil, and Colonel Lawrence seems to have made a clique of the Residency—but I had rather have annexation and two brothers, of whom *one* has been bred to, and understands, his work—than a contingent and an autocracy of one brother whose genius lies in an irregular line.

ECONOMIST.

No. VIII.

MY LORD—I am sorry to see that the English papers are not yet unanimous as to the policy to be pursued in the Punjab. The *Times* proposes no scheme, but rather sets itself to suggest difficulties—and in doing so exhibits a woeful ignorance of the facts. Indeed, some very absurd fallacies concerning the Punjab, the Sikhs, and the Afghans have gotten possession of the English mind. It is not denied that geographically and historically the Punjab is part of India—but people at home cling to the belief that it is filled with an unruly and desperate population, and the fear that to hold it would be to walk on hidden fires—and ever since the Caubul catastrophe they have a respectful dread of the Afghans, and are haunted with the idea that to advance our frontier is but to “fly to evils which we know not of.” It has been my object to show you that the Punjabees are not ungovernable, and that on the Indus we have, in all human probability, that much wished for object, a “*finality*,” inasmuch as the

Anglians are, as an offensive military power, *utterly contemptible*. I trust that you estimate the supposed difficulties at their true value. The imaginary dissuasives from the one true line of conduct must be conscience as regards the treaty, fear as regards our ability to keep the country, or policy as regards the *finality* of the measure. I am glad to find that the treaty seems to have died a natural death. No argument is hinged on *that* pretext, and the tenderest conscience may therefore throw over that consideration without fear of offence. In fact, "*the Sikhs*" neither made the treaty nor broke it. The few individuals who went through the farce of consent were nominees of the British power. Dulleep Sing was a mere piece of paper money, and is now as valueless as a note when the bank has broke. Shere Sing has been treacherous, but for the rest they have met us manfully: they have fought for empire, and they must stand by the result, which is against them.

After all, *fear* is the prevailing argument against annexation. The *Times* talks of the Martial tribes commencing with the Sutlej. But *you* are not "afraid!" You know better. You know that the Sutlej is the boundary of no tribe or class of tribes. The Sikhs do not commence with the Sutlej. In fact, most of Sikh-land lies to the east of that river. The population on either side is the same, the Sikhs are the same, the Jat soldiers are the same, the cultivators are the same. Yet it is admitted that the territory on one side is quiet and manageable; then why not that on the *other* side? If you are still unconvinced, let me show you a village on this side and on that, and you will find no point of difference. Let me take you into a village on the left bank of the Sutlej, and I will show you first the *old Sikh* comparatively weak, separated from the population, and depending on the favour of Government for a subsistence. Next, you shall see scores of the new Sikhs, men who once served in the Lahore army, now returned to their places in their own

villages, very likely disavowing the character of Sikhs altogether, and making the best and most active cultivators. Lastly, you shall see the fine Jat race which inhabits that country, and members which may be induced to turn Sikhs and serve in a regular army on being paid for the same. There is something manly and substantial about their character. In soldiering they like to be among the regulars, and are seldom found among the irregulars, and the tawdry tail of 'great men. In cultivating they are regulars too. They are all for long leases and money payments. They make their own arrangements, and pay their revenue like men. The present is a most unfortunate year of famine, but in ordinary seasons I know no part of India, the internal economy of which presents so pleasant a sight. There is a healthy tone which it is pleasant to witness, and a healthy population pleasant to deal with. They are not unruly, but are remarkable for the respect paid to our rule. Even an ordinary affray is now almost unknown. In short, they like our system, and think that it fully compensates for the gain to some of their members in the predominance of the Sikh army. Ask these people whether they would like to go back to a double government and a contingent. It is the only proposition that might perhaps induce them to rebel.

Cross, then, the river, and you enter no new country. Your materials are precisely the same. The zemindars have not yet had the same advantages, and the Sikh soldiers have hitherto continued to serve. But annex, and within six months, if things are managed by people who understand them, the country will assume exactly the same phase at the Cis-Sutlej territory—almost all parties will give in their adherence to the new state of things—men's minds will be set at rest—imaginary difficulties will disappear as if by magic, and you will then discover that you have quailed before phantoms as unreal as any recorded in story. The Sikh country will speedily become one of our best and quietest possessions.

I have spoken more particularly of that portion of the Punjab from whence the Sikhs spring. Of the other portions it has not been pretended that there is anything to dread. They are now as they were when the country formed a "peaceful province of the Mogul empire," with this exception, that they dislike the Sikh rule, and would welcome our ingress with most sincere satisfaction.

If you yet doubt the result of taking the Punjab in our own name, I would beg of you to look back to the infinite array of precedents furnished by our history and experience. We have seen many strong and formidable-looking native government succumb, and war has succeeded war, till each was absorbed. But has evil ever in *any one instance* resulted from annexation? Every state which retained the substance or the show of independence has come into collision with us, but, singular to relate, domestic rebellion in our own territory has been almost entirely unknown throughout our whole Indian career. I do not consider the small outbreaks in the Jullunder to be *domestic* rebellion, inasmuch as they were in immediate connection with a hostile and, in their eyes, triumphant army—and these outbreaks were but those of a few individuals, and never made any head. Even the irregular warfare in different parts of India with hill tribes of a race other than Hindoo has been almost invariably on behalf of some puppet potentate. The broad fact remains, that in our own important possessions serious rebellion has throughout our history in India been *unknown*. Will you, then—can you, in the face of this all-powerful fact—give way to imaginary fear? The country is the same, the people is the same, and what has taken place in other parts of India *must* take place in the Punjab. Annexation will bring safe and lasting peace. Half measures must be followed by troubles, misgovernment, and disturbance. So it has ever been. The only serious outbreak in our provinces which I remember was one at Bareilly, about, I think, the year 1813—and that was a mere mob opposition to a Chowkidari

Tax, and was completely and finally put down by a couple of companies. Rohilkund and the Rohillas had at one time a great name, and can anything be quieter than that country now is? Look at the records of the old districts of Rohilkund, and you will see that when we first took possession things were by no means so quiet, nor the people so apt, nor so much respect paid to our name, as has been and will be the case in any part of Sikh-land. Armed parties traversed the district—wings of regiments with guns went out to collect the revenue from refractory villages. Yet things soon quieted down, and no one now looks on Rohilkund as a country held but by the force of bayonets. Much more easily would the Punjaub be brought to the same state.

The Sikhs are a military class, much more tractable and more easily moulded to our purpose than Rohillas or other military Mussulmen. I cannot too often repeat, and you cannot too carefully bear in mind, the grand distinguishing mark of the Sikhs, as compared with other Indian soldiers, in their not having yet lost their connection with the soil and their character of agriculturists. I confess to having myself a particular partiality for them. They are fine fellows, without prejudice or nonsense of any kind, who can turn their hands to anything. They are quite free from the ridiculous pretensions to dignity and superiority of the most contemptible Mussulmen. They have not forgotten their origin. Indeed, I think the Sikhs and Jats of the frontier a people whom we should particularly cherish and attach as our subjects. They have much more of our own character than any other Indian race. While the Mahommedan pays but a sulky and constrained obedience, they, can and *do* look up to us—and as soon as the intoxication of recent power has subsided the obedience of all will be hearty and willing. Make much of them, my Lord. You fear to grasp a serpent, but you may yet find it a faithful servant; situated on the frontier of India, they are most desirable

subjects, for they may be used at any time against the Mahomedans beyond the boundary. Their sympathy with our Government, conduct, character, and habits, will always be much greater than any other foreign race.

You must be careful, indeed, that you mar not this fair picture by mismanagement. You must have a proper system and proper instruments, and then see if the Sikhs do not soon cheerfully acquiesce in your authority. Under a double Government all parties would be wretched. If they have misgovernment and a revenue system which they dislike, the Sikhs must have military service as an outlet. Under a system which suits their taste and gives its due to industry and capital, they stand in need of no such safety-valve. But if you destroy the Sikh army without at the same time ensuring the requisite facilities for practising the arts of peace, then, indeed, will there be a cankering and pestering sore which may have lamentable results. Such is, and must be, a double government, and such is the frightful slough which it must be your first resolution to avoid.

It is remarkable how much even Sikh chiefs in their prosperity cling to old associations—how little they forget the instability of Indian greatness. It is a sort of proverb among them that sovereign power may pass away any day, but that the proprietorship of land subsists through all changes (which is indeed the case till our civil courts come into full play)—and men who have the Government share of the revenue of many villages are yet still more covetous of *Zemindaree*. I have seen many instances of this—and the trouble they took about it when in the plentitude of their power would almost induce the belief that they anticipated the result, and had an eye to the details of our system. I could show you a village *Cis-Sutlej*, an old possession of the Attaree family, where Sham Sing Attaree-wala (killed at Sobraon) took immense pains to make himself *Zemindar* of a single *Pattee*. In short, their natural predilections all lie this way. Their present position is but

an accident. They will readily return to the occupations of their ancestors, and you need not distress yourself with vain fears. Never was there a better hand. You have but to play it in a reasonable way. It is not, as one of the papers says, a choice "between dangerous neighbours and unruly subjects," but between dangerous neighbours and quite useful subjects. The popular delusion is the very opposite of the truth, and you will, I trust, *prove it to be so*

Thinking, as I do, that the Jats and Sikhs make good subjects and good soldiers, I think that if you increase the army you cannot do better than offer service to those who wish it. The Sikh regiments have answered well, and the eating our salt would give us an additional hold on, and connection with, the population from which the men are drawn. Besides, late experience goes to prove that they are much better men than the "*Poorbea*" Sepoys. They have also fewer prejudices—they can put their bundles on their own heads when occasion requires—they eat from the same common cooking vessel—are altogether more hardy and *European-like* in their habits. They would be a great accession to the army. One great mistake was made—as to the Sikh regiments, and which deterred many from entering—the insisting on their wearing "Topees." I am no advocate for yielding to prejudices—far from it—but all races and *all* religions have their peculiar ideas, and two things particularly prohibited to Sikhs are *Topees* and tobacco. Why, then, when we are so particular about Hindoo and Mahommedan prejudices, we should go out of our way to make the service disagreeable to the Sikhs without the least object, I can't conceive. A man can't go into village without getting into a quarrel, because the villagers call him "*Topee-wala*." Surely it is an innocent prejudice, and they are so free from this kind of thing that their *one* prejudice might be indulged. English soldiers would be indignant if compelled to wear turbans. I fancy that the *Topee* is a blunder from mere ignorance.

The *Times* makes the question of annexation depend on obtaining a "*finality*," asks where we are to stop, whether we shall annex Afghanistan too? I answer certainly not, for reasons which I have already mentioned. Afghanistan would not pay, it is no part of India, its inhabitants are not Indians. The more the Dost and his subjects fight among themselves the better for us. The Indus is our "*finality*," and as far as the present condition of the world goes, there is every prospect of our being free from fighting on that boundary. If you doubt this, the Afghans are well known to officers of our army; ask those in whom you have most confidence whether there is the slightest probability of their being able to oppose a single brigade in fair fight in the open field, whether they have ever done so? The country does not yield the revenue to give strength to the sinews of war, and the character of the people is entirely against their making good regular troops. Besides, they are utterly disunited, in race and everything else. They are no nation, and we have nothing to fear from them. Most assuredly it is for a "*finality*" that I would go to the Indus. Once more then, my Lord, be not afraid. Do not sit at Ferozepore, like a boy afraid to rob an orchard because "*Man traps and spring-guns*" are duly advertised on a board—make up your mind at once, like a man. There is nothing else for it.

It just comes to this, will you make a temporary arrangement or a permanent one? Will you look to the security of the frontier, or to empty names? Will you do justice to the country which providence has placed at your feet? Your mission is a great one, and you must fulfil it; but, before all things, remember that if withdrawal is a cowardice, any half measure is a *double cowardice*—the cowardice that prevents you from annexing and the cowardice that prevents you from withdrawing. Take either course, but *beware* of the fatal middle course. If you withdraw, the work has but to be done over again, if you compromise we are inextricably committed.

I hope I have not been doing you an injustice: but certainly this delay alarms me. Show that I have been mistaken. Do not let Sir H. Lawrence have all the argument to himself. *Do not mistake the Durbar at Lahore for the people of the Punjab or for the Sikh nation.* Remember that it is the great rock on which others have split.

ECCOMINST.

ECONOMIST CONGRATULATES THE GOVERNOR-GENERAL.

MY LORD—At last we breathe again more freely—at last the clouds of doubt and suspense are made glorious summer by the sun of annexation. The 29th of March 1849 will long be memorable in Indian history, and long will be famous the name of the ruler who has given a “*finality*” to the Indian Empire. My Lord, I do most sincerely and heartily congratulate you. The Sikh power, the Sikh army, the Empire of Runjeet Sing, and almost the Sikh name, are things of history. Not only for seven years, but I hope for a *much* longer period, a shot will not be fired in the Punjaub. The permanent pacification of the country follows from annexation as naturally as effect can follow cause. Any serious disturbance is next to impossible. The means of disturbance no longer exist—the spirit and the will must speedily die out. The Sikhs will soon be known but as a quiet and agricultural people. The Punjaub will be a submissive and prosperous province, yielding in the arts of peace to none in India, and, it may be (if advantage is taken of so fair an opportunity of introducing into our system the improvements which experience suggests), surpassing all in good government—in the adaptation of institutions to the circumstances of the people, and the contentment of an industrious yet manly population. It will be found that even if barren tracts make the whole revenue not very large in proportion to the gross area, yet the large fertile territories will yield a considerable and easily-collected revenue, which is a

clear gain to our Indian finances—and more than a clear gain, for it will not only be an addition to our rent roll, but may almost be made the means of diminishing our expenditure—inasmuch as we shall now be free from the enormous cost of defensive and offensive measures of constant repetition and little intermission. You have now discovered the metal of which the Affghans are made, and a few years hence they will be about as little, and as much thought of, as the Burmese now are. The western will be little less secure than the eastern frontier. And while you rejoice in having done your duty to your own country, you will not think lightly of the benefit conferred on your species and on the people of that country, which has been added to the British crown. No humane man could have, by any act of his, permitted the recurrence of the scenes of carnage and sickening waste of human life, which have ensanguined the last year of our history. No wise or benevolent man could have refused to bestow on a subject people that liberty to sow in seed-time and reap in harvest, which forms the simple economy of an Indian population; and by the aid of a genial climate and certain *self contained* institutions, natural poor-laws and immemorial village corporations perhaps gives more human happiness than the more complicated rights and more artificial institutions which distract Europe. I don't know whether you meant to enhance the value of the boon when you kept the world so long uncertain and distrustful about annexation; but it is now apparent that distrust was out of place. The measure is well-weighed, deliberate, and complete—and the public voice on the subject will be *unanimous*. Other Governors-General have added to the Empire, but you have *completed* it; others have conquered successive parts, but you have consolidated and secured the whole. For the first time India is *really* our own—nay more, for the first time India is under the dominion of *any one* master. You are the first *sole* ruler of the most famous country in the world. You occupy a throne which has been, since

ambition first appeared in the world, the golden prize for which all have struggled—but none have fully obtained. And you may be proud of your position. You have *achieved* it, and I hope that you may keep it long. You have wronged no man, but you have done your duty, and done it well.

Having attained the *finality* of conquest and of empire thus early in your reign, for *you* may be prepared the double glory of both consummating a career of war, and originating a career of peaceable reformation. I hope that it may be so. A reformation is wanted. The laws, the customs, and the consciences of a northern race, and an artificial society, must be more approximated to the plain practical understandings of an Asiatic people who *WILL* hold that black is black, and white is white, whatever philosophers may say to the country. But on this I may not now enter. I will but once more congratulate you on your position, and I am sure that all India and all Europe will, with one accord, join in the congratulation.

It is singular, in reviewing from the commencement of the whole contest with the Sikhs, to observe how remarkably fortune seems to have favoured the good cause—how everything has turned out *for the best*. I believe that there is much reason to be thankful for all that has taken place. If the Sikh army had been a little less determined, and its resistance a little less protracted, we might have lost the blessings of annexation; if it had been a little more successful—but no—I will not be unpatriotic enough to conjecture what might then have happened. In the first campaign it is very *possible* that if our advantage had been pressed the war *might* have terminated little less abruptly than on the present occasion, and I do believe that the military obstacles overcome, annexation must have been at any time a successful measure. Yet still when we see what the Sikhs have this year done with small resources, we must not forget that in 1846, Mooltan, Cashmere, Attok, Kangra, and the whole resources of

the country in their possession—our army shattered, and the hot weather setting in—the result must have been at best doubtful, and we would hardly now run the risk of 1846, in preference to the certainty of 1849. The Sikhs, too, if once conquered, might and probably would have been kept under, but their prostration and subjection could have been nothing like what it now is. That they should have been twice conquered is the most fortunate thing in the world. They will never rise again. They have tried war, and they have tried rebellion, and certainly they had enough of both. The particular events of this last war have been not less favourable in their results than the general fact of the *double* conquest. The campaign has been a protracted one, and I have little doubt that the effects in the permanent pacification of the country must be much more certain and lasting than if the war had been nipped in the bud by a much more dashing and summary termination. I do not go so far as to give your Lordship credit for so *very* far-sighted a policy, but under providence such must be the result. The whole mass has been thoroughly fermented—no portion can have escaped the purifying process—all the bad humours have come to the surface, and have been eradicated. You have now but to strain off the clear liquid and keep it carefully in new bottles (I am glad to see that you do not trust entirely to old bottles for your new wine) all will then go right. You have only farther to take care that no new element of mischief gets mixed up in the process of purification. Keep an eye to the *old* bottles too—especially to one very large and very old bottle—the Patriarch of the cellar. If he should happen to burst great will be the outpouring of good wine. However, as he is such a renowned old vessel, we will hope that he still retains powers of distension to meet the exigencies of the times. I am not disinclined to believe that it will be found so.

But I have diverged from my demonstration of what we owe to a favouring Fortune. I am no judge of the

strategies of war. My sphere is a more humble one. But this I will say that if ever most sincere and heartfelt thanks were due for a victory it was for Goojerat. It seemed like a special interposition. Men are indeed led to their ruin by being first demented, and never was there a more striking instance of it. Most appropriately might the despatch have commenced with the words of the doughty and God-fearing Hero of a former age. "The Lord hath deliveerd them into our hands." Well did the General and the army do their part in the deliverance—and for the rest, thanks to our "*Ikkal*" and to General Gilbert, another month has ended war; the discomfited Sikhs have laid down their arms, never to be resumed; the country has been purged, purified, and regenerated—and I hope that when you make a tour next cold weather you will find it swept, garnished, and prosperous. Your fiat is sufficient—one dash of your pen changes the scene, as in any Arabian tale, from darkness into light.

If anything were wanting to show the character of the Sikhs, and of the war, the manner of its termination must resolve all doubts. We have had no Guerilla warfare, as the English papers anticipated—no desperate struggle of fanatics Akalies. We have but had a regular army meeting us in struggle on a fair field. The *morale* of that army is destroyed by defeat, and we hear no more of it. The soldiers had little *personal* connection with the Chiefs, and had they been *desperate* men they might have continued a very harassing contest. But no—they are no desperadoes—they are comfortable people, accustomed to serve Runjeet Sing on daily rations and monthly pay. They have wives and children, and lands and cattle at home, and they have no taste for starving in the desert in the Ogro-like hope of one day drinking the blood of a Feringhee. They have little nationality—merely the natural love of domination—but they like the good things of domination—not the life of a dog in the wilderness; and, failing the former alternative, they are quite prepared to return to their homes and

stay there. Hence their readiness to lay down their arms at the suggestion of their officers. You may be sure that the last 8 months of scanty or no pay—little to eat, and much to do and suffer—has thoroughly cured them of all martial ardour. They like a guerilla warfare about as much as a London guardsman would like bush fighting among the Caffres. They have abundance of pluck and courage—but it is a *calculating* courage—and deprived of a nucleus you will never hear more of them.

Altogether, I maintain that by the favour of Providence our position in reference to the Punjaub and the Punjaubees is more favourable than any mere human disposition could have made it. For you it remained to pluck the fruit thus presented to you. At last you have put forth your hand and taken it. You are *illustrated* by the act. This day has indeed taken a load of doubt from the grey hairs of your admiring.

ECONOMIST.

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